

DOVER BREXIT TASKFORCE

Friday 19th October 2018

In attendance:

Charlie Elphicke MP – Chair

Cllr Keith Morris – Leader, Dover District Council

Cllr Mark Dance – Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Kent County Council

Dafydd Pugh - Economic Development, Kent County Council

Romain Nivelles - Head of the Regional Council's delegation in Brussels

Mark Weller- Chief Inspector, Kent Police

Richard Christian – Head of Policy and Communications, Port of Dover

Tim Reardon – Head of EU Exit, Port of Dover

John Keefe - Director of Public Affairs, Getlink

Jack Hart – Head of Strategy and Engagement, Office of the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner (with responsibility for Brexit)

Nadeem Aziz - Chief Executive, Dover District Council

Officers:

Roger Walton - Director, Dover District Council

Tim Ingleton – Head of Inward Investment, Dover District Council

Phil Hayes - Senior Parliamentary Assistant / Office Manager, Office of Charlie Elphicke, MP for Dover and Deal

Michelle Farrow – Head of Leadership Support

Notes of meeting:

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Noted

2. Scene-setting: Chair

- Cllr Morris noted the wide reaching circulation of the second impact report and subsequent media interest.
- C Elphicke noted the need to plan for a realistic scenario with robust contingency plans. Noted the need to speak with one voice on concerns around proposals to divert to other ports, use of Manston and M26. Also noted a forthcoming meeting with Chris Grayling at Dover Port next week.

3. Round table updates on transport, infrastructure and borders:

- J Keefe updated the meeting on the UK and French signed concessions, including the contractual obligation to match the speed of border controls to the flow of traffic.
- R Nivelles updated the meeting on the difficulties and challenges of a hard Brexit and preparatory work being undertaken. This work includes new control lines and new sanitary infrastructure, which needs 18-24 months to be operational. The BIP does not currently exist in Calais, Dover or Eurotunnel, there may be a new customs office in Calais, with 70 additional staff. Noted fluidity is the main priority and smart, innovative traffic solutions need to be found. Regionally work is

looking to implement a smart Brexit, acknowledging the potential increase in human resources and increased border checks, funding applications are being made to support this. The ports are very keen to keep discussions and relationships ongoing with Dover.

- R Christian noted analysts are exploring the implications of traffic diverted away from the short straits and it is suggested there would be an economic cost of £2.5bn. Even if this were to happen the time delays would not be acceptable and this does not solve the issue. The Port of Dover has consistently raised reservations concerning the use of Manston.
- T Reardon noted the technical notice on customs arrangements has yet to be published, also noted the strong relationship with French ports in Calais and the overall objective to keep flowing traffic and to cater for predicted growth in the years ahead. Noted does not foresee any additional checks. Animal and plant checks are heavily dictated in EU law.
- M Weller noted planning and preparation work for any/all delays and potential for mutual aid in worst case.
- J Hart requested support for the Police and Crime Commissioner request for additional funding to cover the Brexit period. Also noted the PCC can raise any issues from this group to the national meetings.
- J Keefe noted the goal is to ensure the short straits keep the traffic and keep it flowing, border controls are essential to this and Government decisions need to be made and clarified, technological solutions are possible. Both the Port and Eurotunnel will continue to move traffic as quickly and easily as possible.

4. LGA Roundtable and Dover Annual Skills Fair:

- Cllr Morris updated on potential for both end 2018/early 2019, dates to be agreed.

5. Agreed Actions:

- To continue to share information and speak with one voice
- Cllr Morris to request a further meeting with the Minister to raise issues discussed at this meeting
- To all support the joint tourism links and the joint funding project
- To send a letter to the Minister, from the Taskforce, including:
 - Support for the PCO funding request
 - Request additional investment to the Kent road network to provide resilience
 - Support the short straits as the only solution
 - Demonstrate the commitment to joint working with our French colleagues to continue to support tourism and business investment
 - That any additional customs checks on goods that may be required are conducted at a location removed from the channel crossing, to ensure frictionless trade and fluidity of movement is maintained.
 - Support for KCC's bid to 'Keep Dover Moving' and that any such funds are ringfenced

6. Date of next meeting:

- To be agreed.